



CA DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATION
STATE
SPECIAL SCHOOLS

Braille Bites

California School for the Blind

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Superintendent's message

"I would rather be the man who bought the Brooklyn Bridge than the man who sold it."

-Will Rogers

As our new school year begins we welcome several new staff and students to our school. This influx of people and ideas always brings with it new challenges and energizes our efforts to meet the needs of our students. On the downside, we say good-bye to several outstanding staff members who have served our school and students so well for many years. These feelings of nostalgia may have led our outstanding editor, James Rudder, to include a 22 year old picture of me with the Brooklyn Bridge in the background, or maybe he's just having fun.

As you will read in this issue, CSB's team extends beyond our direct care education and residential staff to support staff including the custodians who are

By: Stuart Wittenstein



featured in this issue. If you think you know all that our custodians do for our school and students, be prepared to be amazed as you read the article highlighting their role.

Finally, I urge you to spend some time reviewing the article "Preparing Our Students For Work." There is much valuable information about how everyone in our community can participate in these important preparations for the world of employment and citizenship for our students.

Look Who's New!!!!



Shelby Zimmerman
O&M Specialist



Erica Hogle
O&M Specialist/ALP
Teacher



Michael Hart
Student Assistant



Yurika Vu
Assistive Technology
Specialist



Loretta Cook
Office Technician



Daniel Thomas
Student Assistant



Maureen Green
Assessment Center

CSBEF—Off to a GREAT start!

By: Sharon Sacks

We just completed our first year as an education foundation. We started with a balance of \$5000, and have received generous contributions that have doubled our account balance to over \$11,000. During this past year we funded the following for students and staff:

Supplies for **CSB**'s Haunted House for Halloween

Tuition for one of our assistants to attend community college

Hotel coverage for students to attend a regional goalball tournament

Financial support for a **CSB** student to participate in para-olympic training

A new television monitor & DVD player for our parent apartment

There is much more we can achieve. We need your support by volunteering to become a **CSBEF** Board member. Board meetings are three times a year: October, January, & June of each year. We try to have two fund raising events per year that have minimal work for foundation volunteers. We look forward to another successful year.

If you wish to donate, we are a 501(c)3 organization. Please make checks payable to **CSBEF** and send them to:

CSBEF, PO BOX 2624, Fremont, CA 94536-0624

Donations are tax deductible

Braille Student of the Week Program

By: Caitlin O'Malior

The Braille Student of the Week is an award given to students who have displayed hard work and dedication in Braille class, either by reaching a goal, earning an excellent grade on a Braille or Braille test, or simply by putting extra effort in their reading, homework and classwork. The Student of the Week award is not necessarily given out every week or to every student, just when we feel a particular student has shown us great growth and improvement in their work.

This award is presented to the student by Dr. Kreuzer, Dr. Sacks, Dr. Wittenstein and/or Ann Linville. The student receives a sash made special just for them in their favorite colors, decorated with their favorite shapes, symbols, etc. in a variety of textures. The student also receives a very special book (printed in both text and Braille) that is filled with messages of congratulations and affirmations from the staff and students at **CSB**.

So far the Braille program has had two students win the Student of the Week Award, Diego G. and Donte M.

“I was happy when Dr. Kreuzer and Dr. Wittenstein came to my class to give me the award. I felt surprised and proud.” says Diego. “The best part about being Student of the Week was the book. I felt so special. I will keep the book forever.”

“Being student of the week motivates you to work harder and get all your work done. Not just so you can be Student of the Week again, but so you can learn things easier and it won't be difficult anymore so you will not get irritated.” Donte M. explains. “When I wore my sash I felt like a king. All my teachers and family were proud of me. I love the book, and going through and reading all the messages in it.”

Both Diego and Donte have said they will work hard in hopes to become the Student of the Week again!

Preparing Our Students for Work

By: Sharon Sacks and Ann Linville

While we have a thriving transition program at **CSB**, our staff is always looking for new and innovative ways to improve student outcomes. One of our major goals at **CSB** is to prepare students for adult life. For many students this might mean transition to the next educational environment. For others it might mean preparation for living and working in the community. If we are to be successful in this preparation process, we need to start early. According to Karen Wolffe, national expert on career education and transition for students with visual impairments students need to be able to do the following to compete in the world of competitive work:

- Read & write at least 150 words per minute in braille or print
- Be able to calculate math without the use of a calculator
- Have good listening skills & be able to recall information accurately
- Use knowledge & use of mainstream technology for work-related tasks
- Demonstrate time management strategies for work: punctuality, using a watch
- Demonstrate a repertoire of social skills to engage effectively with co-workers and supervisors
- Having volunteer experiences in school and in the home community
- Having opportunities to shadow individuals who are working in competitive jobs
- Having a range of volunteer and paid work experiences
- Developing a system for organizing books, materials, and equipment
- Taking responsibility for one's behavior and actions

While the staff at **CSB** works to create these opportunities, it is important for families to take an active role in the transition process. What can you do?

- Allow your student to have chores around the house
- Provide opportunities for volunteer experiences
- Expect your child to complete class assignments and follow through with work experience opportunities
- Expect your child to act in a socially appropriate manner in school, at home, and in the community

Custodians of **CSB**

By: Melanie Allen

The custodians of **C**alifornia **S**chool for the **B**lind are a vital part of Business Services. The members of the custodial team include Marino Gairan, Luong Hua, Chul Kim, Ken Lee and Eddie Huggins, who is the Lead.

Not only do the custodians clean educational classrooms, locker rooms, dining hall, bathrooms, dorms, the gym, and the recreation center the custodians also move furniture throughout the school. The custodians set up for **CSB** events such as White Cane Day, concerts, dances and other activities. Each member of the custodial team interacts with staff and students during their day and is an important part of **CSB**.

Each custodian is assigned a residential area (dorm or apartments) and educational buildings. They are responsible for servicing each room in the building. Since there are so many rooms on our campus they are very busy.

During the summer months and break periods when students are not attending **CSB** our custodians are hard at work stripping and waxing floors, cleaning carpets and providing extensive deep cleaning to each area. Thank you to all of our custodians for keeping **CSB** clean.



Custodians (left to right): Chul Kim, Eddie Huggins, Ken Lee, Luong Hua, and Marino Gairan

White Cane Day at CSB!

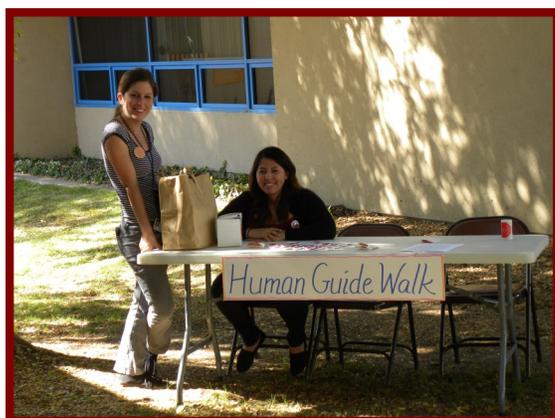
By: Nita Crow

Back in October of 1964, the congress of the United States, at the urging of the National Federation of the Blind, authorized the President of the United States, Lyndon Johnson, to proclaim October 15th of every year, White Cane Safety Day. The resolution states, “Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives, that the President is hereby authorized to issue annually a proclamation designating October 15 as White Cane Safety Day and calling upon the people of the United States to observe such a day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.” This resolution sought to increase public awareness of the white cane as a tool for independence.

Every year on or near October 15th, our school celebrates White Cane Day. In years past, we have had assemblies, marches, essay contests, and other activities celebrating this very important day. This year we tried something a little different.

Our staff and students work hard throughout the year learning to shop independently, take buses and taxis, cook, clean, learn braille and technology, participate in fitness activities, make friends, learn how to make life decisions, and more. All of these areas are part of what is called “The Expanded Core Curriculum” and they are all aspects of what we teach here at **CSB**. Our White Cane Day this year focused on using as many of the elements of the Expanded Core Curriculum as possible. Here is what we did:

We decided to focus on having a taste test of all kinds of healthy foods. Each class was tasked with determining what food they wanted to feature (Self Determination). Next they had to make shopping lists (Use of Assisted



Technology and Braille and writing skills), plan and execute a trip to a store or farmer’s market (Orientation and Mobility), prepare the food (Independent Living & Recreation & Leisure), and then serve the food (Social Interaction skills). I think we touched on almost all of the eight parts of the Expanded Core Curriculum!

October 16th was a warm and sunny day. Classes set up at tables that were placed along the four

Continued on next page 



sides of the Town Square area of campus. This made table hopping very easy. All of the classes came up with delicious healthy food. Holly Hody's class had an assortment of carrots, celery, and more. Each of her students signed a pledge to try and eat healthy foods with every meal. Jonathan Waite's class grew their own tomatoes and served them along with tomatoes they dried. Delicious! We tasted fresh and dried blueberries, squash, trail mixes, chili, jicama, peppers, olive oils, and "puppy chow!" Some of our administrators and specialists also got in on the fun and served plums, hummus and Greek olives. Some of our students and staff had never tasted a few of these foods and were

delighted to find out that they really loved the new flavors.

We had some other fun activities that students and staff enjoyed. Two older students, along with the assistance of our two fantastic APE teachers Sue and Mary Alice, set up obstacle courses in the gym. Young and old students had the opportunity of attempting to work their way through the maze. Several of our apartment students conducted Human Guide walks around the Town Square. They kept everyone safe and demonstrated just how adept they are in maneuvering themselves and others in crowded areas. We also had a BrailleNote GPS demo given by a few of our amazing O&M staff members, Jim and Katie.

And to add to the entire positive experience, our wonderful music director, Wayne Siligo, along with past and present music students provided us with a beautiful landscape of music throughout the afternoon.

The amount of people who assisted in organizing, setting up, participating, and cleaning up for this special day involved most departments of this school. It is rewarding beyond words to know that I get to come to work every day and be around staff and students who support each other in such a fundamental way. Until next year, Happy White Cane Day!



Google car visits CSB

By: Jonathan Waite

On October 22nd the Google Self-Drive Team visited **CSB** with two experimental self-drive cars. One car was put on static display and **CSB** students and staff explored the exterior and the interior of the car. Google staff answered hundreds of questions from eager future drivers about all aspects of the cars operation and its technology. Many younger **CSB** students who explored the static car were delighted that the horn could still be operated independently!



A second self-drive car took a select group of **CSB** students, who were later to be interviewed about their experience, on a “driverless” trip around Fremont.



Many thanks to all the folks at Google who made this visit possible and to the students from **CSB** who gave Google valuable feedback about the car of the future. Students saw the self-drive vehicle as an opportunity for impulsive, convenient and stress-free independent travel, plus a great way to thank their driver friends! Students asked Google to make the car accessible so it could reassure drivers and passengers that they were in safe hands. Also students asked that Google should add tactile identifiers to the vehicle controls for Blind and Visually Impaired drivers!

Thank you Google!

Student Spotlight

My Blindness

By: Noralys C.

Blindness is simply a condition

It was never intended to bring out my definition

Why have the vision to see the things worth feeling

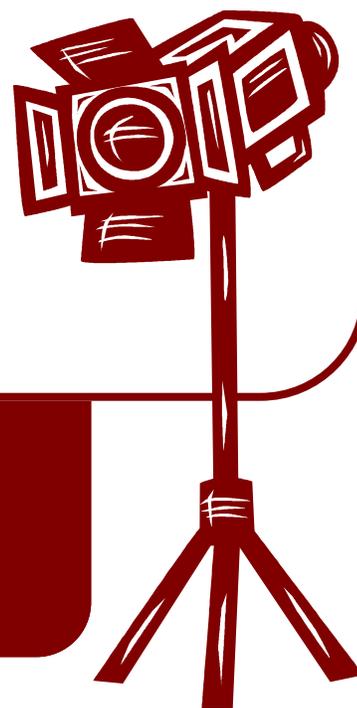
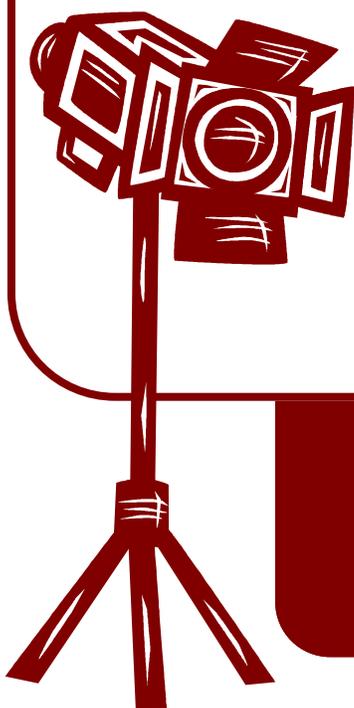
Being myself and loving life is much more appealing

Achievements and compliments are worth putting aside

For my relationships with people are much more valuable than my pride

Whether I'm up above or living on earth

Those who truly love me could never dispose of my worth



Yoga is Powerful and Fun!

By: Amanda Bybee

Many of the students of **CSB** participated in Miss Bybee's yoga segment this summer during ESY. Yoga is shown to improve - not only a person's alignment, muscle tone and bone density -but also awareness, focus and attitude. This is what Kelly Sample, of Pittsburgh, PA, is proving completing her PH.D candidacy in clinical psychology incorporating the clinical health benefits of yoga. Kelly is an Ananda Yoga colleague of Certified Yoga Instructor, and **CSB** Transition Teacher, Amanda Bybee.

Miss Bybee professes positive re-enforcement for a healthy mind/body by using daily independent goal-setting for her students and hopes to continue incorporating yoga practice for all. She has included stretches against the wall for students to find and keep their balance. She even offers hula hoops and physio balls as props. Amanda will also continue with basic yoga instruction for any staff on alternating Wednesdays during lunchtime. When asked how Yoga was this summer, Natalie, in Miss Cook's ESY class said, "It was fun!"



FREE WEBINAR

“Understanding Differences: An Exploration of IEP Identifications for the Teaching Artist—Working with Students Who Have Visual Impairments”

How can we make art experiences accessible and enjoyable for students who have visual impairments? How do they benefit from participating in hands-on art activities? **CSB** will be offering a free Webinar presentation on Tuesday, November 19, 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. Stuart Wittenstein and art teacher, Minda Tayam will be discussing the benefits of engaging in the art process. Minda will be sharing information about tools, materials, and strategies for facilitating hands-on art experiences.

For registration information, please contact mtayam@csb-cde.ca.gov or call 510-794-3800 x235.

Central Meeting Stop – Student Success Story

By: Patrick Weseman

“May I help you please,” asks Chris N. to students as they walk into the Student Store at **CSB**. He helps the student shoppers locate and purchase their items. No transactions are complete without a cheerful “Thank You for coming” from Chris.

The **CSB** Residential Student Store enterprise opened with much fanfare on September 30th. The store sells everything from snacks to basic toiletries. Its prime location in the Recreation Center has helped to make it a favorite afternoon/evening gathering spot of the students. The store also hosts student council meetings when they are held after school.

“It’s big, and I like going and eating my snacks,” said Evan P.

Students enjoy catching up on the day’s events or even meeting a new friend from another dorm.

The store is a residential student run program. The store staff-students shop for items, to restock the store. They are part of the sales staff also. These store positions help in the development of marketable work skills.

“I like stocking the store and learning skills,” said Dominic M., one of the store shoppers and stockers of the store.

Besides learning marketable skills, The **CSB** Student Store is one of the first places that many of our students learn to use their own money.

“The Student Store is a safe place for our students learning to use their money to pay for their items, some, for the first time. They are learning an important life skill that can be transferred far beyond **CSB**” explains Tamera Shakir, Supervising Counselor of the Northridge Dorm, “It is also where many students first learn the value of money.”

The store incorporates real world experiences of learning to budget, shop and socialize while enjoying time spent with friends.

“It is neat. It has everything a student needs to have for snacks,” said Austin W, “It is a great place to hang out.”

Shred Patrol is on a role!!!

By: Students: Amara, Shelby, Jess, Amanda, Jackie, Teresa, Carolina, and Katie S.

How many students are in the shred patrol?

All: "8 we shred after school and Amanda shreds during school time."

What are the guidelines for being in the Shred Patrol?

Shelby: "Be on time"

Teresa: "Be committed"

Jackie: "Follow directions"

Is it a regular shredder?

All: "No"

Amara: "It's bigger than a regular shredder, it's an industrial shredder".



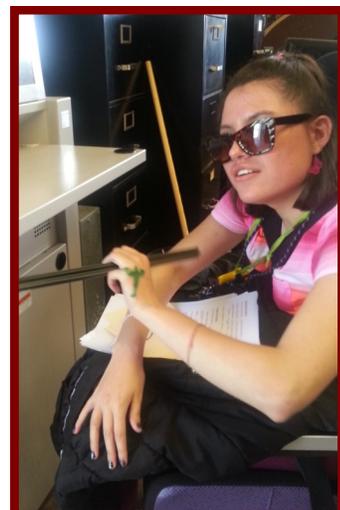
Where do you get your shredding?

Teresa: "From people who need things shredded."

What kind of things do you shred?

All answered:

"ID papers", "Documents", "Confidential papers", "Anything paper"



Do you ever read any of the papers that you shred?

All together: "No!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!"

Carolina: "Maybe if it was in braille"

What are the rules for shredding?

Amara: "Put the paper in correctly"

Teresa: "Don't shove too many in or the machine will get jammed"

Jackie: "Remove the paper clips"

Jess: "Don't put your fingers in the slot. The machine will cut them off."

Shelby: "Change your clothes or roll your sleeves up."

How do you transport the papers?

Carolina: "We use a huge garbage can on wheels"

How many pieces of paper do you shred a day?

All: "About 150"

Do you get paid to shred?

All: "Yes!!!!!"



White Cane Day in Sacramento

By: Katie Smith

On October 15, 2013, Jonathan Waite's class, a small music group, and select **CSB** staff provided outreach to the California Department of Education (CDE) for White Cane Day. Students who participated on this day included: Jacqueline A., Dakota F., Alma G., Joseph L., Cody M., and Angelica V. **CSB** staff who attended are: Sharon Sacks, James Rudder, Jim Blackshear, Katie Smith, Shelby Zimmerman, Jonathan Waite, Wayne Siligo, and David Grandstaff. The music group (led by Wayne and David) included: Robert L., Alex H., and Markus C.

Students were divided into groups to teach blindness-related skills to CDE staff. Jacqueline and Angelica brailled the name of participants, gave out braille alphabet cards, and pamphlets about White Cane Day. Cody and Katie Smith explained how people who are blind or visually impaired cross the street by listening for the straight traffic surge. Cody then offered a blindfold and gave some perspective on what it's like to cross the street without sight. Joseph and Jim Blackshear demonstrated features of the Sendero GPS (the accessible GPS for the BrailleNote). Alma, Dakota, and Shelby Zimmerman taught participants how to use a cane and go through an obstacle course. Firsthand experience with the cane is always a popular station! Thank you Wayne and David for orchestrating a wonderful group of star musicians! Thank you Jonathan and his class for volunteering your time and honing your O&M skills! Thank you Shelby and Jim for being fantastic O&M instructors that I am proud to work alongside! Thank you Sharon Sacks for your support of our students and staff on this day! Thank you Stuart Wittenstein for your advocacy for our



school as a whole and the pride you take in your work! Thank you Minda Tayam for loaning student artwork that we proudly displayed and making our activity station signs! Finally thank you Scott Kerby, John Paris-Salb, Andrew Laufer and all CDE participants for taking the time to visit our students to show your support and appreciation of White Cane Day and our student's hard work. I couldn't be more proud of how well our students represented **CSB** on this day.



“**Halloween**” By: Melanie V. (Holly Hody’s class)



Super Hero Shirt Day

We think our assistants
are **SUPER!**



Pictured from left to right: Daniel, Michael,
Marcie, Michael, Micha and Yanci

A LITTLE BIT MORE...ABOUT KEREN-OR

By: Alysa Chadow

All of you are familiar with my yearly fund-raiser for Keren-Or, a school for the blind in Israel. Some of you are even familiar with the school and what it's about. Most of you are not, hence this article.

Keren-Or (Hebrew for light of hope, or hopeful light) is a school for blind, multi-impaired children and adults located in the hills above Jerusalem, Israel's capital. Started by a group of parents in 1989, the center was completed in 1991, and its signature hydrotherapy program was inaugurated in 1992.

In addition to the hydrotherapy program, Keren-Or contains state-of-the-art facilities for the teaching of blind, multi-impaired children and adults. Students receive instruction similar to our own IEP process, and that includes vocational training as well. Music therapy, pet therapy, and adapted physical education are part of Keren-Or's curriculum, along with braille, O & M, and daily living skills. Hmm...Sounds a lot like **CSB** to me.

In 2010, Dr. Edward L. Steinberg, Keren-Or's board president, began a partnership with the Perkins School for the Blind. The two schools launched a conference in Israel in that same year in which vision professionals from around the world came to learn about the latest practices in the field of vision education and multiple impairment. The partnership's mission is to provide such educational opportunities for those working with this population on an on-going basis

So if you ever wonder where your contributions to this wonderful school are going, now you know, and don't hesitate to ask me even more!